

What we claim is:

1. A method of treating a patient with autoimmune disease having an elevated BLYS by administration of a composition containing an amount of antibody to BLYS sufficient to bind excess BLYS to a patient in need thereof.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the patient has systemic lupus erythematosus.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the anti-BLYS antibody is provided in a liposome.
4. A method of monitoring the changes in condition of a patient displaying symptoms of autoimmune disease comprising periodic evaluation of the level of BLYS in the blood of said patient using BLYS-binding antibodies by:
 - 1) exposing samples of (a) sera or plasma from patients suffering from diseases arising from self-antigen driven autoimmune response to anti-BLYS antibody and (b) at least one control sample containing a known amount of BLYS to anti-BLYS antibodies,
 - 2) incubating the product of step 1 for a time sufficient to allow said anti-BLYS antibody to bind to BLYS in the samples,
 - 3) evaluating the amount of anti-BLYS antibody bound to BLYS in each of the patient and control samples, and

4) comparing the amount of BLyS in control samples patient samples to determine amount of BLyS in the patient samples.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the test is an ELISA test.

5

6. The method of claim 4 wherein, in step 1, the anti-BLyS antibody is on a solid support.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the support is a microtiter plate.

10

8. The method of claim 6 wherein the solid support is sepharose beads.

9. The method of claim 4 which is a Western blot test.

15